

Gibril Fouad Haddad
SUNNA NOTES
Studies in Ḥadīth and Doctrine
Volume II: The Excellent Innovation
in the Qur'ān & Ḥadīth
with Ibn Rajab's
THE SUNNA OF THE CALIPHS

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Epilogue

An Innovation of Misguidance: Unenlightened Feminism

The people shall always be in a good state as long as they take their knowledge from their elders, their trusted ones, and their people of knowledge. When they start taking it from their boys and their reprobates, they shall be destroyed. – ‘Abd Allah ibn Mas‘ūd⁵⁰⁴

Shaykh Wahbī Sulaymān Ghāwījī listed, at the end of his monograph on the excellent innovation, *Kalimatun ‘Ilmiyyatun Hādīyatun fil-Bid‘ati wa-Aḥkāmihā*, several innovations of misguidance which plague the Religion in our time. Among them:

1. The separation of religion from state.
2. The confinement of Islam to certain matters (for example family law) and the exclusion of its jurisdiction over other matters (for example criminal penalties).
3. The belief as well as the expression of “the banquet of Islam” (*mā’idat al-Islām*) as if Islam were optional for consumption or abandonment.
4. Applying to the Muslims the Divine and Prophetic texts that pertain to the disbelievers.
5. Giving in to the temptation of mentioning the defects of the Ulema in a way that resembles slander and actual calumny more than it resembles pure and sincere advice, as may be found even

⁵⁰⁴ Narrated from Sa‘id ibn Wahb by Abū ‘Ubayd and Ya‘qūb ibn Shayba as cited by Ibn Hajar, *Fathī* (13:291), Ibn al-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd* (p. 281), Ma‘mar ibn Rāshid (*ṣaḥīḥ*) in his *Jāmi‘* (in ‘Abd al-Razzāq 11:246), al-Tabarānī, *al-Kabīr* (9:114 §8589-8592) and *al-Awsaṭ* through narrators declared trustworthy according to al-Haythamī (1:135), al-Khaṭīb chainless in *al-Faqīh wal-Mutafaqqih* (2:79), Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Jāmi‘ Bayān al-‘Ilm* (1:158, 2:159), and Abū Khaythama in *al-‘Ilm* (§155). Al-Bayhaqī cites it in the chapter entitled “The Common Person’s Imitation of the Learned One” in his *Madkhal ilā al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (1:237-247).

in some of the classics of old such as Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr’s *Intiqā’* and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī’s *Tārīkh Baghdād*.

6. Connecting other than Allah Most High to a situation out of ignorance, such as saying, “Were it not for this money I had saved, or this medicine, or this surgeon, or had I been driving instead of walking, I would have died, or I would not have survived this economic depression, or this or that...” In reality all is in the Hand of Allah Most High beyond our calculations and expectations. Weak or nonexistent belief in *Qadar* is the wont of materialists as well as Christians and Jews.

7. Changing the formulas of *tawassul* to sound as if one is asking other than Allah Most, a typical error of the visitors of the *Awliyā’* sometimes accompanied by other errors such as tying votive threads to the grave, a blatantly unislamic practice. Forbidding *tawassul* is also an innovation of misguidance.

8. Literalist interpretation of the texts that bear on the Divine Attributes that connote anthropomorphism.

9. The consideration of the three Abrahamic dispensations – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – as a single Religion or that all religions lead to truth and salvation after the masonic philosophy of Jamāl al-Dīn Asad Ābādī al-Afghānī and his student Muḥammad ‘Abduh. This is actually believed by so-called Perennialists and other free-thinking self-proclaimed Sufis.

We may add to this list one of the ugliest innovations of misguidance to date, which issued from actual Ulema from a major school of the Indo-Pakistani region, consisting in attributing something they called “the possibility of lies” (*imkān-e-kadhib*) to Allah Most High. To Him we belong and to Him is our return!

We conclude this book with an overview of a classic contemporary innovation of misguidance, from which we seek refuge in Allah Most High!

In March, 2005 the so-called American “Progressive Muslims” movement orchestrated a Friday prayer at the Synod House of the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City with male and female congregants led by a woman named Amīna Wadūd, presented by her advertisers as a “professor of Islamic studies at Virginia Commonwealth University” and “the author of the groundbreaking book *Qurʾān and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman’s Perspective*.”⁵⁰⁵ Their boast that Wadūd is “the first woman to lead men in prayers” shows a studious, unprincipled ignorance of the defining role of past practice in the understanding of misguided innovation. A sister movement, the “Muslim Women’s League,” did boast a precedent in Ghazālat al-Shabībiyya.⁵⁰⁶ This dajjālīc character was the mother of the lawless Khārījī Shabīb ibn Yazīd ibn Nuʿaym al-Shaybānī (d. 77) who had placed her on the *minbar* of al-Kūfa to give *khuṭba* after he had stormed it at the head of an army of eight hundred men and two hundred arm-bearing women – until, after two years of bloody rampage and civil unrest, al-Ḥajjāj destroyed them and their followers.⁵⁰⁷

The “Progressives” and their friends have resolved their inability to prove the licitness of their behavior within Islam by flouting the system from outside with a *J’accuse!* of chauvinism and male sexism that begins with our liege-lords Abū Hurayra and Abū Bakrah al-Thaqafī and trudges through centuries of sexist Qurʾānic exegesis, sexist jurisprudence, and sexist ḥadīth

⁵⁰⁵ http://www.muslimwakeup.com/events/archives/2005/03/friday_prayer_l.php.

⁵⁰⁶ <http://www.mwlusa.org/publications/essays/polirights.html> as of June, 2005, *ditto* <http://www.mwlusa.org/publications/positionpapers/politics.html>.

⁵⁰⁷ Cf. ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (ʿAṣriyya ed. p. 78-80=Āfāq ed. p. 89-92) and his *Milal wal-Niḥal* (p. 74-76).

transmission down to our times. Only in this way can they “break the interpretive monopoly,” that is, pick and choose from the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth in a vacuum, free at last from the annoying guidelines and preconditions of scholarly exertion in Islam such as ethics, knowledge of Arabic, a firm grasp of the texts, and a living familiarity with our legal and intellectual history.

The anti-method of the “Progressives” contains the seeds of their own demise: the very claim that it is legitimate for anybody to claim authority makes it all the more possible to reject the claimant’s authority in turn and start perpetually newer, “more progressive” trends from where the previous trend left off, often disowning it as the early Khārijites did of one another. The “Progressives,” for example, have invented a *ḥijāb*-less prayer for themselves as their New York congregation displayed. One day their female leader might actually make this state of undress the law and frown upon its lingering use by female congregants still possessed of a (male chauvinistic) sense of shame. Later, American “Progressive” illuminati will insist that the Fātiḥa be recited in English inside prayer (perhaps allowing Swahili during Kwanzaa), free from racist Arabocentric strictures.

In the end, a Muslim might pray in short shorts behind his sing-songy female imām with the non-Arab accent, after she has graced the congregants with a *khuṭba* about “God, praise Her.” She is *ḥijāb*-less “because {*Lā ikrahā fil-Dīn*}” and shakes hands indiscriminately with men, none of whom minds that she wears “Opium” to the prayer. Another congregant prays with malt liquor on her breath. The man next to her prays in a *junub* state but he is not *junub* according to a Zāhirī position if there was no ejaculation. He married his granddaughter, which is licit according to a Khārijī view – temporarily and without witnesses, of course. Their self-imagined Sufis are fond of name-dropping “Ibn ‘Arabī” – whom they rank slightly above René Guénon – to spin

any given ruling of the Qurʾān and Sunna into their idea of the *Dīn*. Whoever suggests the necessity of taking religious knowledge from those who are knowledgeable in the Religion they consider a rigid and possibly pro-terrorist conservative. They all pay their religion-neutral non-mosque hall rent with interest earnings “because interest is not *ribā*” but do not consider that *zakāt* is due on paper money, thus saving a bundle which they can invest in Halliburton or Annhauser-Bush stocks so they can live the good life.

All of the above types can still holler that they are Muslims, that they are followers of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, though not of his command to hold fast to his Way and that of his Rightly-Guided companions by biting on it with their very jaws.

One of the arguments for banning formal prayer from U.S. public schools is that others would then have their chance to pray their own way too, including Satanists. Each of the horrendous “prayer of the future” scenarios we have extrapolated is based on an aberrant *fiqh*-arguable position in the books to illustrate that when you subordinate worship to a (wo)man-made discourse on equality and democracy you open a very risky door. A skillful enough academic with a moral mission such as Khālid Abūl Fadl (who has boasted of praying behind his wife long before the New York travesty) or Tāriq Ramaḍān can resuscitate each and every one of those heresies and sell them to U.S. and other shoppers as a new and improved, updated, politically correct Islam.

Defenders of the “Progressives” dismiss this historically-based model of the Pandoran dynamics of unbridled revisionism as a *reductio ad absurdum*. They evade the fundamental issue of the lawlessness of innovation and instead shed crocodile tears for “the very real social problems of which this controversy is but one symptom.” In their misty eyes, enough misbehavior by bad Muslim men provides justification to tamper with the roots of

the Religion and radically revise the very contents of the Qur'ān and the Sunna. They applaud the very novelties which our Prophet ﷺ decried as “newfangled matters neither you nor your forefathers ever heard of before.” In their hurry to emulate the former followers of Moses and Jesus, they would have the Muslims also disappear into the lizard-hole of ex-believers who “liberated” themselves into irreligion.

Sadly for the “Progressives,” our Prayer is not a platform for pluralism. Valid concerns about family and gender issues no more suddenly make the modalities of Muslim worship negotiable than did, say, the valid concerns of non-Arabs against Arabocentrism in the time of al-Jāhīz or in Iran or Kemalist Turkey. One should not have to tamper with *Ṣalāt* in the process of inveighing against the sins of male pride or sexism. We need not run out of options other than throwing out the baby with the bath water; surely the *Umma* has more imagination and more resources than to tamper with its Pillars. Surely our Prophet ﷺ taught us enough about Allah for us to worship Allah for His sake and to know better than to use the Sacred as tools for something ulterior. Precaution and common sense (if not knowledge of our Principles) dictate that we not mix the religion with post-20th century -isms and liberation theologies; and that we insure at least the formal Divine acceptance of our worship and that of our families through adherence to the “path of the Believers” that the Qur'ān makes the precondition for such acceptance.

Nor is blank permission the basic principle (*aṣl*) in matters of worship. In worship, as in the creed, the *aṣl* is *ḥurma* [categorical prohibition] because matters of worship are Divinely ordained. (In sexual intercourse also the *aṣl* is *ḥurma* and becomes permission only through the contract of marriage.) Hence the Prophet ﷺ did not say “Pray as you see fit” but “Pray as you see me pray” and he stressed Prayer as the central pillar upon which rests the

tent of one's Islam and the first thing for which one shall be brought to account on the Day of Judgment. A concerned Muslim could never advise any son or daughter or brother or sister except with the strictest precaution toward it.

For those who still believe there is such a thing as sunna and *bid'a*, not only the multiplicity but the slavish catering of new sects to political and social fads and the unfailing minorityism of old and new sects are all, ultimately, a testimony to the established middle path and a reinforcement of orthodoxy.

A Feminist *Mubtadi‘a*: Amīna Wadūd

In a brief article dated May 2002 and published on the internet, “‘Āisha’s Legacy: the struggle for women’s rights in Islam,” Amīna Wadūd revealed the most simplistic scholarship imaginable, apparently assuming that none of her intended public would challenge her entirely novel presentation of history, law, and hermeneutics. This is who the *New Internationalist* website blurb enthroned as our “foremost Muslim feminist scholar” whose article “will introduce readers to Islamic feminism.”⁵⁰⁸

In that article, Wadūd does a tap dance around the exclusivity of the Qur’ān as a source of Law in Islam except when it comes to illustrating proto-feminist themes, such as praising our Mother ‘Āisha “from whom,” Wadūd says, “the Prophet [ﷺ] said we should learn ‘half our religion’” (a forgery according to Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn Kathīr, al-Mizzī, al-Dhahabī, al-Qārī, *et alia*). Wadūd chooses to dismiss Ḥadīth in her main argumentation and when she invokes it to make a point – in violation of her own principles – she invokes the weakest possible kind. This kind of contradiction is all-too-typical of Orientalists and their Muslim competitors-in-revisionism; they pit the Qur’ān against Ḥadīth then quote ḥadīth sources right and left if it suits them.

Wadūd should not have invoked only the Qur’ān but also Ḥadīth for the main issues she raises, and then only the strong and authentic ḥadīths. For example, the ḥadīth of the creation of woman from a rib which is in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.⁵⁰⁹ This is not to say that Eve “is a flawed female helpmate extracted from him [Ādam] as an afterthought or utility”! Those are Wadūd’s own inflammatory words. However, the rib is the protection of the heart and Woman represents the protection of

⁵⁰⁸ <http://www.newint.org/issue345/legacy.htm>. *New Internationalist* (vol. 345, May, 2002).

⁵⁰⁹ From Abū Hurayra cf. Abū Dharr in al-Dārimī and Samura ibn Jundub in Aḥmad.

Man rather than the reverse; but for such protection to take place, man must protect woman in the first place. This is because if any harm reaches the rib (woman) then the heart (man) is left unprotected. The Prophet ﷺ said in that very same ḥadīth: “Therefore, treat women kindly.” Unfortunately, this ḥadīth does not find favor as feminist evidence in feminist discourse.

Similarly “Qur’ān-only” feminists ignore the fact that it is in the ḥadīth that one will find the strongest and most explicit ex-coriation of wife-beating and that it is from the Qur’ān that Muslim wife-beaters usually fish out their idea of a justification.

These flaws are no accident but underlie a pattern of shoddy thinking – the coarsest, shallowest type of historical revisionism. Wadūd says: “During the Abbasid period, when Islam’s foundations were developed, leading scholars and thinkers were exclusively male. They had no experience with revelation first hand, had not known the Prophet directly and were sometimes influenced by intellectual and moral cultures antithetical to Islam.” The marvelous jump from profiling the early Ulema as male non-Companions to actually accusing them of being “sometimes influenced by cultures antithetical to Islam” is mind-boggling. Surely, even the worst of Abbasid culture had more immunity to unislamic trends than 21st-century American Muslim culture can dream of achieving! But this pseudo-historicism is only a veneer. All Wadūd wants is for readers to hear “exclusively male” and conclude that the formative period of Muslim culture needs re-writing. However, in the process of her gender assassination she commits blunder after blunder:

1. Leading scholars and thinkers were not exclusively, but predominantly, male during the Abbasid period as in any other period, and even then, so what? If those Abbasid Scholars had been predominantly women, is it to say that they would have been inherently more honest and qualified?

2. No one has “experience with revelation first hand” except Prophets unless she means direct contact with one that had experience with revelation first hand, *i.e.* the Companions, a predominantly male group. Wadūd predictably would have another problem with the fact that the Prophets themselves are an exclusively male category.
3. Every student knows that the Ulema of Islam by and large kept fiercely aloof from politics, let alone “intellectual and moral cultures antithetical to Islam.” To say that they were adversely misguided as a whole is baseless calumny of the first order, not to mention that it tears to shreds the notion of the *Umma*’s infallibility and virtually shouts at our Creator: “You have misled us!”

Wadūd goes on to claim: “In particular, they [the male scholars] moved away from the Qur’an’s ethical codes for female autonomy to advocate instead women’s subservience, silence and seclusion. If women’s agency was taken into consideration it was with regard to service to men, family and community.” This mock trial is the desired caricature of male conspiracy which unenlightened feminists propose. It is not only simplistic but invidious to scholarly history and dishonest to the *Umma* past and present.

Wadūd is the academic face of a fanatically revisionist Islam intent on rewriting not only *fiqh* and *tafsīr* but the Qur’an itself. After she founded the woman group “Sisters in Islam” in Kuala Lumpur in the early nineties, her teaching contract at the International Islamic University of Malaysia was not renewed. Nevertheless, the seeds were planted and an August, 1994 *Economist* editorial entitled “In the Name of Eve” openly promoted “Sisters in Islam” and their idea of women’s “equality that Koran, give or take a verse or two, gives them in principle.”

A strong scholarship on the place of woman in Islamic intellectual history should refute such fraudulent endeavors with facts and keep quack feminism out of Islam. This is not to say that issues of domestic violence, sexual abuse, or hasty *hudūd* justice taking place in the midst of Muslim society should not be addressed. They should be addressed, exposed, excoriated; but not at the expense of the entire Islamic tradition. As one student of knowledge wrote, “until practicing Muslims who strive to adhere to *Shari‘a*, who study, who would otherwise be labeled as ‘conservatives’ stand up and say something, Muslim women’s issues will continue to be the domain of non-Muslim feminists and the establishment who brush them off with [the remark], ‘That’s cultural, not Islam,’ and then launch into the Lecture on the Ideal Status of Muslim Women versus the Reality of Western Women.”

Countless generations of Muslim women played an integral role in transmitting the Religion of Islam from the Prophet Muḥammad – upon him and them blessings and peace – and his successors including its texts and practice from the earliest centuries down to our time. But in her “first Friday sermon by a woman” according to a *Guardian* article dated Saturday, March 19, 2005 Amina Wadūd is quoted as saying, “Women were not allowed to (have) input in the basic paradigms of what it means to be a Muslim.”

An instance of Wadūd’s “input in the basic paradigm” is her reference to our Creator as “He,” “She,” “It.” The article went on, “Particularly controversial was Wadūd’s periodic substitution of the Arabic word for God, Allah, with the pronouns, he, she and it, arguing that God’s omnipresence defied gender definition.” In her slightly outdated, post-Vatican II apostasy (*ilhād*) of the Divine Name, it appears Wadūd follows the lead of Pīr Wilāyat Khān and his syncretist, perennialist, New Age “Sufi Order of the West.”

More relevantly, she is reviving its scandalousness by trying to inject it into the mainstream and disturb not just a happy few but as many as possible. The sociologist of American Islam, Yvonne Haddad, is quoted in the same article as saying, “People in America think they are going to be the vanguards of change, but for Arab Muslims in the Middle East, American Muslims continue to be viewed on the margins of the faith.” (Haddad seems to think that American Muslims are viewed more favorably by non-Arab Muslims than by Arabs.)

In an interview entitled “Dr. Amina Wadūd Leads the Ummah in a Historical Prayer”⁵¹⁰ Wadūd is quoted as saying: “The end conclusion was that the principle of Ijtehad will be used to discontinue slavery even when the Quran did not advocate for its immediate end.” While it is true the Qur’ān did not literally command the immediate end of slavery it certainly advocated for its immediate end by equating the freeing of slaves with salvation and worship in many verses. Our teacher Nūr al-Dīn ‘Itr gave this golden rule for self-hating Muslims over the issue of slavery in Islam: “Not a single book of jurisprudence or its principles contains a chapter entitled ‘slavery’ in all Islam but they all have a chapter entitled ‘emancipation.’”⁵¹¹

Wadūd also said, “The Quran worked to eradicate the previously negative practices toward women, and moved forward to justice. We must realize that this was done fourteen centuries ago. At that time, it was not even possible to imagine women with spiritual equality.” The contrary is true: it is precisely in our time that we are hard-pressed to see women or men of high spiritual rank while it was frequent fourteen centuries ago to see women with spiritual superiority, let alone imagine women of spiritual equality. The Prophet ﷺ made glowing references to his first wife Khadīja, his youngest wife ‘Ā’isha, his daughter Fāṭima, various

⁵¹⁰<http://naseeb.com/naseebvibes/prose-detail.php?aid=3631> as of 19 March 2005.

⁵¹¹Class communication.

women of the *Muhājirūn* and *Anṣār*, and the women of former times such as Āsia the wife of Pharaoh, the most truthful Virgin Mary, and others.

Wadūd then says, “We are members of our current History. We make History, we imagine our future.” The belief that “we make History” is the core of qadarism [absolute free will] which Wadūd here expresses more explicitly while it remains implicit in most of her statements about history, empowerment, and change. The belief in *qadar* which the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, taught is that it is Allah Who makes history and that its end has already been written while we remain (contrary to the heresy of fatalism and determinism) fully responsible for our actions.

“Leading ṣalāt (prayer) is representative of the devotion to ritual as well as the capability of participation for women,” Wadūd says. However, contrary to what Islam views as the abrogated dispensations of Judaism and Catholicism, Islam does not accept any change in its creed and worship. Leading *Ṣalāt* is an integral aspect (*hay’a*) of a Divinely-ordained pillar of worship, not a platform for the “participation” of a gender or this or that interest group. The Prophet ﷺ described this pillar as the central pillar of the Religion, announced it will be the first item of reckoning in the last Judgment, and warned us in his very last breath not to jeopardize it.

Wadūd continues, “Within the framework of intellectual development, common sense is always considered inferior and insufficient to ḥadīth or *fiqh*.” It is one of the more intellectually lazy and deceitful assumptions that the Islamic disciplines are somehow dissociated from basic common sense. In reality, intelligence is the soul of ḥadīth and *fiqh* and they are, of all the human discourses we know, its greatest proponents.⁵¹²

⁵¹² As the Prophet ﷺ said in his mass-transmitted saying, “For whomever Allah desires immense good He grants them superlative understanding of the Religion.”

Then Wadūd puts forward her grandly irresponsible idea that each man and each woman is his or her own Imām: “The final analysis is that each human is responsible for being a Khilafa [sic] who must act like an agent responsible to obey Allah, according to their best understanding of interpretations from experts as well as for discussing alternatives brought about by real life experience.” Behind the gibberish read: “no leader, just me and myself.” Wadūd is casting off the shackles of {ask the people of the remembrance} (16:43), {above every learned one there is one more learned} (12:76), {obey those in authority among you} (4:59), and {hold fast to the rope of Allah and do not separate} (3:103) as so many male constraints, substituting instead the idols of subjectivism and empiricism.

A person is responsible for his or her own actions and is duty-bound to follow the Divine dispensation whether or not they understand its expert interpretations or have “discussed” so-called alternatives on empirical bases. To follow a School of Law is precisely the safest and most Qur’ānic and Sunna-based way of assuming such a responsibility. It is simply not for each of the two billion Muslims on the planet to manufacture his or her own dissent under the pretext of individual responsibility, “according to their best understanding of interpretations from experts as well as for discussing alternatives brought about by real life experience!” *Khilāfa* is not a fluid honorific that gets to be used as a pretext to dissolve a Muslim’s categorical obligations into meaningless relativism that re-emerges into such forms as we see nowadays in free-wheeling, nihilistic pseudo-*jihād*.

Wadūd goes on to massacre exegesis and legal precedent through shallow misreadings of the Qur’ān and early history. She claims, “The second caliph of Islam, Hazrat Omar did not collect the booty as referenced in the Quran. This booty taking was a common practice at the time when the Quran was taken more

literally.” In fact, our liege-lords Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Alī all collected the booty and distributed it in the same way with respect to both the letter and the spirit of the Qur’ān. That there was some discontentment in no way indicates a less literal understanding of the Qur’ān than in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. There is no difference in the basic Qur’ānic distribution of the spoils of war, according to the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs and the four Imāms of jurisprudence, from the time of Abū Bakr to that of ‘Alī ﷺ.

Wadūd protests, “The interpretation that I should shut up and sit down was not the method that I would use to live Islam. I cannot be an agent or a khilafa [*sic*] unless I am honest about what is in my heart.” Feminists who use the straw man of male silencing of women only reveal their ignorance of Islamic history, which shows anything but demure silent women. The woman who stood and corrected her *khalīfa* (our liege-lord ‘Umar) in the midst of his Jumu‘a sermon clearly did not “shut up and sit down.” However, she was speaking from both knowledge and a sense of justice, not justice alone uninformed by knowledge. Hence, ‘Umar vindicated her. Moreover, all the while, she never at any point left the Qur’anic confines of {*obey those of you who are in authority*}. She practiced *naṣiḥa* with the greater courage: within the system, not by trying to stab the system in the back with intimations of subversion and distrust from a mediatized hiding-place. That woman won the palm of honesty here and hereafter and she would have taken to her heels at the mere idea of her being her own *khalīfa*.

“VIBES: ‘Is it true that pre-Islamic women were braver and more outgoing than those in the post-Islam era?’ Wadūd: ‘No, I don’t aspire to this view. Take the Prophet’s wife, Khadija. She was unable to manage her own business without a male representative.’” How so? That our Mother Khadija relied on male em-

ployees does not automatically show she did not manage her own business without a male representative.

Wadūd openly admits using Divine worship for ulterior ends: “The fact is that a mixed congregational prayer is in no way a precedence of sorts, but simply a **public announcement that should lead to positive feelings**. I realize that this single act won’t transform the community, but is symbolic of the possibilities within Islam.” To intentionally use prayer as a public announcement is the soul of what the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, decried as self-display (*riyāʾ*) and the minor polytheism (*al-shirk al-aṣghar*).

The *Umma* has always been uplifted by what is symbolic of the ideal within Islam, not by exploring the possibilities of chaos that are the undoing of human beings and societies. The *Dhikr* Allah Most High guarantees to protect includes the truthful meaning, not just the letter of the Qur’ān. The *tahrīf* or tampering the Qur’ān castigates refers to the meaning of the Pentateuch before its letter. The importation of this *tahrīf* into Islam is being promoted before our eyes as we speak. The first step to that *tahrīf* is to divorce the Qur’ān from its hermeneutics, the Sunna. The final stage is that she “did not agree with the Qur’ān” itself as Wadūd is quoted as saying by Nazim Baksh in a *Q-News* article titled “Waking up to Progressive Muslims.”⁵¹³

O Allah! Protect us from knowledge which is of no benefit and from knowledge that will become a proof against us in the Next World! *Āmīn. Wal-ḥamdu lillāhi Rabb al-‘ālamīn.*

⁵¹³http://www.ihyaafoundation.com/index.php?page=nazim_baksh/15. Also available at <http://www.q-news.com/ProgressiveMuslims.pdf>.